

Reports say Obama ready to give up program for Russian help on Iranian nukes

(WASHINGTON, D.C.) – U.S. Rep. Mike Coffman (R-Colorado) today asked President Barack Obama to continue the European component of the United States' Ballistic Missile Defense System in order to protect the United States and its allies and interests abroad. The defense system is meant, initially, to counteract any ballistic missile fired into Europe.

Recent press reports claim President Obama sent a letter to Russian President Medvedev suggesting that the United States would be open to trading the missile defense program for cooperation with the Iranian nuclear program. Obama has said the press reports "mischaracterized" his letter.

"No matter what tone was used, our missile defense program should be non-negotiable," Coffman said. "It does not pose a threat to Russia. It protects American interests and our European allies."

"I welcome support from the Russians, and any other nation, on the Iranian nuclear threat," Coffman concluded. "However, gaining this support should not come at the expense of our national security."